

THAT WHICH IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for modifying a tobacco curing barn for the purpose of providing conditions suitable for curing tobacco such that resulting cured tobacco obtained from such barn possesses a tobacco specific nitrosamine content lower than that prior to such modification, the method comprising the steps of:
  - 5 providing a tobacco curing barn equipped with a direct fire heating unit,
  - removing the direct fire heating unit from the barn, equipping the barn with a heating unit that does not provide contact of tobacco within the barn with exhaust gases containing nitric oxide combustion products during cure, and
  - equipping the barn such that the barn is operational for tobacco cure.
- 10 2. The method of Claim 1 whereby the direct-fire heating unit burns propane.
3. The method of Claim 1 whereby the direct-fire heating unit is physically removed from the barn.
4. The method of Claim 1 whereby the direct-fire heating unit is disabled from use during curing.
- 15 5. The method of Claim 1 whereby nitric oxide levels within the barn during curing approximate that of ambient, environmental air surrounding the barn.
6. The method of Claim 1 whereby the barn is equipped with a heat exchange unit.
- 20 7. The method of Claim 1 whereby the barn is equipped with an electrical heating unit.
8. A method for curing tobacco using a tobacco curing barn for the purpose of providing cured tobacco possessing a tobacco specific nitrosamine content of less than 2 parts per million, based on the dry weight of the cured tobacco, the method comprising the steps of: providing green tobacco, placing the green tobacco in the curing barn, subjecting the tobacco to application of heat from a non-direct-fire heating source so as to cure the tobacco, and avoiding exposure of the tobacco during curing to nitric oxide gases.
- 25 9. The method of Claim 8 whereby the cured tobacco possesses a tobacco specific nitrosamine content of less than 1 part per million, based on the dry weight of the cured tobacco.
- 30 10. The method of Claim 8 whereby the cured tobacco possesses a tobacco specific nitrosamine content that is essentially undetectable.

11. The method of Claim 8 whereby the non-direct-fire heating source is a heat exchange unit.
12. The method of Claim 8 whereby the non-direct-fire heating source is an electrically powered heating unit.
- 5      13. The method of Claim 8 further comprising equipping the barn with means to remove nitric oxide from air within that barn.